

Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority

Lewis County Courthouse
Commissioners' Hearing Room – 2nd Floor
351 NW North St – Chehalis 98532

January 24, 2013 - Meeting Notes

Board Members Present: Edna Fund, Lewis County Commissioner; Karen Valenzuela, Thurston County Commissioner; Alan Vanell, Town of Bucoda; J. Vander Stoep, Town of Pe Ell; Vickie Raines, City of Cosmopolis; James Cook, City of Aberdeen; Ken Estes, City of Montesano; Merlin MacReynold, City of Chehalis; Ron Averill, City of Centralia; Wes Cormier, Grays Harbor County Commissioner; Lionel Pinn, City of Napavine

Board Members Absent: Dan Thompson, City of Oakville

Others Present: Please see sign in sheet

Handouts/Materials Used:

- Agenda
- Meeting Notes from December 20, 2012
- Status Update - Jobs Now Act Projects
- Education and Outreach Visit Schedule
- Work Program and Budget
- Flood Warning System Payment Schedule
- Expenditure Review

WORK SESSION AGENDA

1. Call to Order

Chair Raines called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m. She welcomed Wes Cormier, the new Grays Harbor County Commissioner.

2. Introductions

Self-introductions were made by all attending.

Mr. Lyle Hojem commented that he thought the public was missing out on meetings that were done via the telephone because many older people don't have computers or email and are not aware of the meetings. He also stated that he thinks the Flood Authority is doing a great job.

Chair Raines stated the Daily World ran an article that needed clarification. The Flood Authority was not invited to the briefing of the Washington State Senate Agriculture Committee by Senator Hatfield; rather, it was the smaller Governor's work group. That work group does include Ms. Raines and J. Vander Stoep, Commissioner Valenzuela and Jay Gordon. The Flood Authority was not requesting information. Chair Raines stated in the future she will be sure the Flood Authority at large is aware of any meetings in case anyone wants to attend.

3. Update on Governor's Budget

Mr. Kramer distributed a 2-page report on the Governor's announcement of the Chehalis Basin package and capital budget. His plan is to revamp it to use as a handout during the legislative session. The second page has categories of funding that were included in the capital budget and those have not changed. He has been asked for suggested talking points for anyone who talks to the legislature so everyone is saying the same thing. Jay Gordon, Jeff Warnke and Cindy Zender are working as a team in support of the proposal and they will talk to as many legislators as possible to let them know that this is a consensus of the communities across the Basin. There will be a basin briefing in for legislators and their staff in February and the Tribe has agreed to provide lunch. There will be additional hearings and Mr. Kramer will let everyone know when they are scheduled.

Mr. Kramer stated that the capital budget proposal is something that former Governor Gregoire strongly supported. She has talked to Governor Inslee about ten high priority issues and the Chehalis Basin was one of them. Mr. Kramer does not know the Governor Inslee's response. Keith Phillips has been retained by Governor Inslee and will stay on this issue. Governor Inslee will send over his proposed budget sometime in February/March, and Mr. Kramer hopes he will retain this proposal.

Those who attended the Senate Agriculture Committee briefing commented on the meeting. Mr. Vander Stoep was very impressed with the video that Jay Gordon showed about the impact of the flood on the agricultural community in the Basin. Also, he stated Senator Hatfield's office asked for information regarding water retention. Mr. Vander Stoep thought a letter needed to be sent supporting the entire package.

Mr. Cook was pleased that the Tribe was there and that the package represents the interests of every party.

Mr. Averill stated that there were questions at the end of the hearing and one was about taking fifty years to build a dam. The Governor's group's response was that it won't take 50 years, and that fixing the freeway without fixing any of the other problems will cause additional problems.

Chair Raines stated there were questions about what the Basin communities have done for themselves. She will work with the jurisdictions to provide a list of what dollars have been spent in each jurisdiction, from cleanup from the floods to small projects.

Discussion followed about how to calculate jurisdictions' costs and what should be included, such as raising homes, which happened after the fact. Mr. Averill stated that EMS collects information about losses and FCS included a whole chapter in the flood plan on what was spent, so there are things on the record already.

4. Update on Jobs Now Projects

Mr. Boettcher had sent to the Flood Authority a summary piece on the Jobs Now projects. The "Status Update" column shows all the monies that have been authorized and approved by the Tribe, and contracts that have been written between OFM and the receiving jurisdictions.

The second document is an update on the status of each project. He summarized each project. The narrative shows that some projects are funded and/or completed or are under way.

Mr. Kramer stated there are several projects where design options are being explored. He would like to have those project schedules designed in such a way that the Flood Authority could be briefed at the

March meeting. The Governor's Office asked about the expected scope for some projects and Mr. Kramer would like to be able to respond. If possible, when jurisdictions are talking with their consultants, push them to get the preliminary conclusions on project design and scope before the March 21 meeting.

5. Outreach to Basin Governments

Mr. Kramer stated that the Outreach and Education Committee has been working with Mr. Boettcher for a schedule for Scott to visit each Basin jurisdiction and provide an overview of what the Flood Authority has learned and where it is going. Mr. Boettcher had a draft Power Point to present to the jurisdictions and Mr. Kramer asked for feedback after the presentation.

Mr. Kramer suggested a narrative story that there were tough times but things are now coming together.

Mr. Averill liked the pictures of the flooding but suggested that the picture is named so everyone knows where it was taken. He thought a handout of the PowerPoint would be helpful. The slide of the 2013 study on WSDOT freeway protection options needs to show the study is with and without dams. Also, there was no hydrology in the Basin until the Flood Authority funded it. The Flood Authority took criticism for doing a lot of studies but those studies are a compilation of the work that was done.

Commissioner Valenzuela would like to see early in the presentation that the Flood Authority recommended the hydraulic study and fish studies. She agreed that a handout is essential; she thought that it was important for all Basin governments to know what is being done in all areas. There was no slide on the Alternatives Report and that is an important product.

Regarding the narrative, Commissioner Valenzuela suggested not overstating it – The Flood Authority has not always agreed but has come together on large projects. She would like to see more work done on the hydraulic slide to make it more readable and to include a story.

Mr. Kramer suggested bringing in the story of the dam as part of where we have been and where we are going. Is it more important to present the perspective of a framework of where we are now and where we are going, or to walk through the project? We could show maps of projects and the distribution across the basin without getting into the details of the projects.

Chair Raines thought the budget document should be presented to everyone so they have a background of what the budget is which would alleviate going through each one.

Mr. Pinn liked the presentation and thought it was the right size. He also liked the "package" that can be incorporated into a going forward theme. It is the common statement when sharing this information with the public. Regarding the Flood Warning System, Mr. Pinn stated part of the building of success was in the relationship of governmental agencies and various groups, such as Anchor. He asked if they should be included.

Chair Raines stated that particular slide was pertaining to the early warning system and while there were contractors getting us there it would be cumbersome to add all the names.

Mr. Pinn asked if the slides could be customized for each jurisdiction to show what each is proposing for future flood mitigation. Also, a slide shows all the benefits and challenges regarding the environment so could one show the benefits of raising I-5? Why was that supported? People should know the reasons.

Mr. Estes stated he would like to see an abbreviated report: there is work being done on the Wishkah Rd; there is work being done on the Satsop and so much money was received to get the work done. His council uses I-pads, not paper.

Mr. Vanell stated Bucoda has electronic agendas so the council gets a preview of what is coming up. When he talks about the Flood Authority and what is happening he tries not to talk about the conflicts in the past. If someone asks, he says the issues were resolved.

Mr. Kramer stated the message that the team and website is providing is that the issue of flooding in the Basin has been debated for over 80 years and for the first time there is consensus to move forward. He asked if that should be said on the slide show.

Mr. MacReynold did not think the disagreements should be emphasized. The presentation shows that the Flood Authority is working together. These are real projects that will help the people and that should be the primary focus. He thought the charts need to be clearer.

Chair Raines thought a one-page handout of the charts would be helpful. Mr. Boettcher thought the consensus was that the Power Point should go out in advance and be accompanied by paper.

Mr. Vander Stoep suggested that on the Hydraulic Analysis slides, instead of saying "1 of 3" the header should say whatever the chart is, i.e.: Impact of Water Retention; Impact of Bridges, etc.

Mr. Nelson did not disagree with the report but suggested saying "projections" rather than "findings". Findings speak of conclusions. The fish will not be the main driver on this so be as accurate as possible, and be brief. Mr. Kramer thought perhaps it should say there are differences of opinion.

Mr. Louthain liked the presentation. It gives the history and shows a positive move forward. Regarding the historic floods, the Chehalis River volumes is actually rates, not flows. The sequence from 1932 to 2012 includes 1933 in that timeframe but the flood is not shown. People know about the 1933 flood and it needs to be in there.

Ms. Willis also liked the presentation. She suggested putting asterisks on the high floods. There will be other higher floods in other areas or tributaries. Depending on where the flooding is taking place, there will be higher floods at another place or time. Perhaps state "Flooding may be different on another tributary."

Ms. Balmelli-Powe stated that people say that other floods were different from 2007. There could be slides that show benefits of flooding. Have slides that show the benefits of dredging because people will bring this up. Show that dredging has benefits but it is more localized. Have a separate handout that shows everything on which the models were run. She thought more information needed to be on the slide about the cooperation of the agencies in the State. She asked if there were pictures of water inside peoples' houses. Most of the pictures show the water after it had receded some.

Mr. Hojem suggested not leaving anything out. Why isn't dredging being considered? Just answer the question – it is not in the record. Also, why was that site chosen for the dam? If a study was done on one site, why wasn't a study done on the others? Why was this choice made?

Mr. Cook agreed with Mr. Hojem. Explain the geotechnical survey that was done before the fish study, and that dredging was a problem for the environmental people.

Mr. Kramer stated he would help Mr. Boettcher develop a new draft. He also suggested that someone from the Flood Authority go to a different jurisdiction with Mr. Boettcher – volunteer to go to one that is not their own.

Commissioner Fund thanked the Education and Outreach committee for their hard work. Chair Raines thought someone from that committee should attend the jurisdictional meetings as well.

The meeting recessed until 11:10.

BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA

1. Call to Order

Chairman Raines called the meeting to order at 11:10.

2. Introductions

Introductions were made by those not at the earlier meeting.

3. Approval of Agenda

There were no changes or corrections to the agenda and it was approved.

4. Approval of Meeting Notes from December 20, 2012

The meeting notes had an incorrect date of 2013; there was a typo which read Governor's Grief; it should have read Governor's Brief. The notes were approved with the corrections.

5. Approve change in contracts

Mr. Kramer explained that Mr. Boettcher will be doing more work on outreach and the website. He recommended adjusting the budget for Mr. Boettcher to accomplish that work. The contract with GTH was canceled, and that was for \$7,000. Mr. Kramer's rate will drop by \$13,000 with the changes in the meeting schedules. There will be no overall effect on the budget by adding that \$20,000 to SBGH's contract. A motion was made by Commissioner Fund, seconded by Mr. Averill. There were thumbs up all around.

6. Approve payment schedule for Flood Warning System

Mr. Boettcher stated the Flood Authority members agreed to the payment schedule for the Early Warning System, with the payment due by December 31, 2012. That was difficult for Lewis County's Fiscal Department. He would like to change the payments to the end of March 2013 for the first payment and the second payment due by July 31, 2013. There will then be a sufficient pot of money to pay WEST when the bill is due.

There were thumbs up on that proposal.

7. Public Comment

Ms. Balmelli-Powe thanked the members of the Governor's small committee for putting in the extra time to go to the Legislature.

Mr. Smith thanked the Flood Authority for all they do. It appears that things are finally coming to a head with the Legislature and that will send many kudos to the Flood Authority. It is going in the right direction.

8. Reports

a. Chair's Report

The Chair had no report.

b. Member Reports

Thurston County – Commissioner Valenzuela had no report but she asked if the meetings will be posted at the jurisdictions regarding information in the Capital Budget. Commissioner Fund stated when they are finalized they would be posted.

Bucoda – Mr. Vanell stated the Education/Outreach Committee has had good discussions on how to get the word out to members and to the public, including working with the libraries and how to reach everyone. Bucoda is doing fine and appreciates all the work being done by the Flood Authority and is looking forward to getting started on the well protection.

Pe Ell – The Chronicle published a piece that Mr. Vander Stoep wrote regarding fisheries. There may be an opportunity to go forward with fish enhancement and fish protection.

Aberdeen – Mr. Cook thanked Ms. Anderson for her work and welcomed Lee Napier back to the Flood Authority.

Montesano – Mr. Estes volunteered City Hall for the meeting in March.

Chehalis – Mr. MacReynold stated that the Chehalis Flood Authority representative, Arnold Haberstroh, was absent today because he was greeting his son who is returning from Afghanistan. He commended Lewis County Public Works for a great job in getting the Airport levee project designed and moving forward.

Centralia – Mr. Averill thanked Donna Olson for her work on the financials for the Flood Authority. She has done a valuable job in handling the finances since the beginning. He stated that construction is under way on the Harrison-Mellen bridge abutments. This is a Washington State Department of Transportation project for the collector/distributor lanes that will keep hospital access open during flooding in that area.

Grays Harbor County – Commissioner Cormier stated he was pleased to be at the Flood Authority and looking forward to meeting and working with everyone.

Napavine – Mr. Pinn is pleased with the workmanship of the Flood Authority, and the smooth transition made in Lewis County and the continued knowledge that we have with Centralia and the County. He stated this year Napavine is entering its centennial year – 2013 is 100 years since its incorporation.

c. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

d. State Team Report

Mr. Donahue has been working with the US Army Corps of Engineers on a decision on the Twin Cities project for a non-federal sponsor. They have delayed the decision on that project until the proposed State funded studies in 2014. The verbal communication is they will accept and concur with that request. There was some contradictory communication going on and he has worked with congressional staff to work that out.

Mr. Kramer stated the work group recommended that technical groups implement recommendations and framework in the Governor's budget. Mr. Nelson sits on the fish committee with others and they are directing work on installing a screw trap at the proposed dam site for migrating fish downstream and a juvenile monitoring system. They are working very effectively and are jointly funded. There is new collaboration of three groups to focus on improving the understanding of how fish use the basin.

9. Financial Report

Ms. Napier summarized the financial report and explained the expenses. Mr. Kramer stated that there is \$27,000 left in the WSE contract which will most likely not be spent. The Authority may want to allocate that money to something else. Mr. Averill stated there is some wiggle room to move money around. He did not know if what was approved today needs to go back to OFM. Ms. Napier stated she would check on that.

10. Confirm next regular meeting

February's meeting will be a telephone meeting on the 21st. Information will be sent out closer to that meeting. The March meeting will be in Montesano.

The meeting adjourned at 11:46 a.m.